

hammad is... the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets... "—Holy Qur-an, 33 : 40.  
" There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

The

# Islamic Review

Founded by the Late AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL CHARLES WILLIAM  
BUCHANAN HAMILTON OF ROYAL NAVY (Southsea).

General Buchanan Hamilton came of a well-known Irish family, being the son of Canon John Hamilton, of Tuam, County Galway, who was at one time American Ambassador in London and was elected President of the United States of America in 1856.

The General served through the Egyptian War of 1882 on the Beacon and among other actions was present at the seizure of the Suez Canal and the occupation of Port Said. For his distinguished services he won the Egyptian Medal Alexandria Clasp, and the Khedive's Bronze Star.

He was also holder of Suakin Clasp and India Medal, Burma 1885 and Clasp.

He was a regular reader of the Islamic Review and wrote the following only a fortnight before he breathed his last (May his soul rest in peace)

"I HAVE READ THE ARTICLE 'ISLAM MY ONLY CHOICE,' AND HAVE DECIDED TO JOIN YOUR FAITH."



Lady (Miriam) Hamilton

Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton Bart.,

Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Baronet embraced Islam in 1924. Lady Hamilton declared her faith in Islam subsequently. Ed. I R.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَرْجِعَنِي إِلَى حَالٍ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَهْدِنِي إِلَيْكَ  
نَحْمَدُكَ فِي صَاحِبِ الْأَوْلَادِ سَلَامٌ عَلَى رَسُولِكَ حَمَدٌ لِّرَحْمَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## A DECLARATION

I, Helena Isabel Harron Barr, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I adopt Islam as my religion, that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone, that I believe Muhammad to be His messenger and servant, that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

*La ilah ill-Allah, Muhammad ur-Rasul-Allah.*

(There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is His messenger.)

AMATULLAH HELENA I. H. BARR.

[The above declaration is of a British sister, the like of whom has not been seen before. A short while ago she left for Egypt so as to be able to fast during the month of Ramdhan in a Muslim country as she could not get the special atmosphere and facilities in a Christian country which are otherwise to be had in Muslim lands.

Miss Amatullah Barr is a scholar of Arabic, and can read and write in that language. She can recite from memory many chapters from the Holy Qur-án, and is intending to become a *Hafiza*, i.e., one who can recite the *whole* of the Holy Qur-án from memory. We hope and pray that she will, with the grace of Allah, succeed in her noble undertaking. *Ed. R. I.]*

## THE FORBIDDEN FOOD

### THE FLESH OF SWINE

BY THE LATE DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL

C. W. BUCHANAN HAMILTON, R. N.

[We regret we were unable to print this article during the lifetime of General Hamilton. The article, coming as it did from the able pen of a medical men of outstanding qualifications and merit as the late General Hamilton undoubtedly was, is all the more valuable because it proves scientifically that the injunctions of the Holy Qur-án forbidding the flesh of swine as a food are also meant for the physical betterment of those who observe them.—*ED. R. I.*].

He has only forbidden you what dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allah has been invoked ; but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin shall be upon him ; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

In dealing with the question of food it is of paramount importance that one should know the exact nature of the food and also what its microscopical and chemical analysis yields. From the nature of the food with which we are concerned, namely, the flesh of swine, we know that we are dealing with an animal which contains muscle, and therefore protein fats. The first thought would suggest that with a little vegetable (carbohydrates) a perfect meal ought to result, but such is not the case. A microscopical and chemical examination proves conclusively that the flesh of swine is harmful to the human body, and that when Al-Qur-án says we must not eat the flesh of swine it intends to save us from many a disease which would not only shorten our life but make the end of our stay on this earth very miserable. Before we go deeper into the subject as to why we should not eat the flesh of swine, let us first see some of the things which the microscope reveals

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 2 : 173.

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when a piece of muscle or flesh is so examined. All flesh consists of a number of fibres joined together, and when a single fibre is taken and examined minutely it will appear to be cylindrical in shape, enclosed in a delicate covering called the sarcolemma. In ordinary muscle or flesh these fibres are very closely joined together so that a careful mastication is necessary to make their digestion possible. In the case of the flesh of swine, these fibres are so closely connected that it is very rarely that proper separation is made. Thus when the food is not broken up into smaller particles the various digestive juices are unable to penetrate to the centre, and so great deal of bodily harm is done. Now the chief function of the sarcolemma is to keep the flesh firm, but it is not unusual for parasites to be seen living in them, and it is all the more peculiar to the flesh of swine. To render this state of affairs less hurtful, it is necessary to cook the food well, and this cooking is found to act quite well in all flesh except that of swine, in which, owing to the extraordinary close union of the fibres, it is difficult for the heat to reach the various parasites which may be inside the sarcolemma, except by prolonged cooking, which again destroys most of the useful elements of the flesh. But even when cooking is done other difficulties are encountered.

The flesh of a swine has not so much nourishment as the flesh of the other animals. If we make a chemical analysis of it we will find that it contains more gelatine and less fibrin, and is, on this account, less easily digested. Let us, now, direct our attention to the difficulties which arise through cooking. The stomach has certain peculiarities with regard to flavours which need consideration in the study as to why Al Qur-án should warn us against the eating of the flesh of swine. In certain cases where pork is digested it is known that people do not enjoy the very best of health and the stomach appears out of order. This is due to cooking, because in trying to reach the

interior of the meat the outside is overdone or burnt, and the fat which is found in such an abundance gives rise to certain acrid compounds consisting of acroelein and fatty acid, and it is these which disagree with the system and upset the stomach. I have already mentioned that in order to digest the flesh properly it must be masticated thoroughly ; but it will be readily granted that even with the best of teeth and greatest care, portions of solid food not masticated well, that is, made only into a pulp, are actually swallowed ; and when we consider how often teeth are defective, and how carelessly people eat whilst talking, we have to acknowledge that as a matter of fact ill-masticated food is swallowed invariably at every meal. If the flesh of swine, therefore, is swallowed in this manner, we can easily understand how difficult it is for the digestive juices to penetrate the substance when all the fibres are set so closely together. It has also to be remembered that the essential point to secure in eating is that the digestive juice of the stomach shall penetrate every particle of food, and this within a certain time limited to a few hours at the most. If the food is not properly masticated it will be impossible for the centre to be reached by the juice before the stomach has expended its digestive force, and thus a number of undigested particles will be left either to encumber the stomach when it ought to be clean and ready to prepare for the next meal, or, if they passed out of the stomach into the small intestines, either to call upon the second process of digestion to attempt to do what ought to have been completed during the first process, or to irritate the intestines by throwing into them an abnormal quantity of waste. As has already been mentioned, the flesh of a swine is especially liable to parasites. This condition is made possible from the manner and conditions under which pigs are reared, and the part of the swine which is the first to be infected with these parasites is the outside ; and by a strange fate the deep part of the

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lean is not generally liked, the brown outside being the favourite part, although the most dangerous, owing to the parasites with which it is infected. It must not be inferred from this that all swine contain parasites, for in the sucking pig the chance of the animal to become so infected is reduced to the minimum ; but, as we have already seen, these are less nourishing than the older animal. Besides owing to the large amount of gelatine which they contain digestion is not so complete a success in their case as one could wish for.

My chief aim in writing this article is not so much to give information to those who do not know why swine is forbidden to Muslims, as to eradicate the erroneous idea which prevails among so many learned men, Christian and others, namely, that in Arabia, during the time of our Holy Prophet Muhammad, there was a good market for swine, and that Muhammad, who was a shrewd business man, ordered his people to sell their swine and make a fortune thereby. It is also believed that the Holy Messenger found his people dying in the hot weather because of their eating swine, and hence the prohibition. Now all these stories are false and have no foundation whatsoever. No law laid down in our Book, the Qur-án, can be localized to any particular country. Al-Islam is universal, and as such its laws must be obeyed wherever one may be whether the place is hot or cold.

Now, therefore, when you see how your Lord has pointed out to you a harmful practice, which you were ignorant of, I would ask you especially to keep in your mind that great verse and act upon it :

Say : I do not find in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden for an eater to eat of except that it be what has died of itself, or blood poured forth, or flesh of swine—for that surely is unclean—or that which is a transgression, other than the name of Allah having been invoked on it ; but whoever is driven to necessity not desiring nor exceeding the limit, than surely your Lord is Forgiving, Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 6 : 146.

## BUDDHISM IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAM

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.<sup>1</sup>

This verse has a twofold significance. It means, first, that every group of humanity, geographical, racial or otherwise, has at one time or another in the course of its history seen an inspired teacher in its midst; and, secondly, that no section of humanity is left at any time without the spiritual influence of one or other of these inspired teachers. In other words, if a people has lost touch altogether with the teachings and inspiration of the messenger who had once appeared in their midst, then either another teacher is sent among them, or they are connected by political or other circumstances with another race which is receiving light from the guidance brought by a prophet of its own. As a matter of fact, it is not seldom that we read of a series of prophets appearing among the same people.

In the light of this verse one must needs believe that the ancient land of India has had its inspired teachers, and when once we admit this, we cannot escape the conclusion that Buddha was such a teacher, in view of the tremendous influence he wields to-day over an enormously large section of humanity. At least one Muslim scholar has ventured the opinion that the Holy Qur-án contains a reference to the Buddhist religion. This, he says, is to be found in the chapter entitled *At-Tin* or "The Fig," which begins thus :—

Consider the fig, and the olive, and Mount Sinai, and this city made secure, certainly We created man in the best make. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The first three examples are evidently arguments in support of the final statement, namely, that man is capable of very high attainments, that is to say, that he is not the worm of the world he appears to be. The arguments are clearly drawn from the spiritual achievements

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 35 : 24.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 95 : 1—4.

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of man made through religious guidance, and the chief of such existing at the time of the Qur-ánic revelation were undoubtedly three—Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism, mentioned in the order of the strength and influence which they wielded. That Mount Sinai stands for Judaism, there can be no two opinions. As for the olive tree, although tradition associates it with Judaism, and Muslims take it to be a symbol of the Islamic faith, yet in view of the trend of the arguments one is inclined to consider it as standing for Christianity. That the olive branch is regarded by Christendom as a symbol of peace, that Jesus was called the Prince of Peace, and that Jesus' name is associated with the Mount of Olives—are facts that support the theory. Besides, the reference to Islam can be no argument at the time this verse was revealed. Islam was yet in its infancy and had not become a fact of history. Of course, an implied prophecy that it was destined to afford additional proof of man's spiritual possibilities is contained in the phrase: "This city made secure" which refers to Mecca, but the primary significance of the phrase also relates to the ancient spiritual glory radiating from the Ka'ba, and revived by the joint efforts of Abraham and Ishmael, which was so potent, even at that dark and bloody period of Arab history, that the city of Mecca, in which the House stood, afforded an island of safety in the midst of a raging sea of passion and lust. Here was no slight token of the forgotten spiritual achievement of Mecca and of the Arab people. Following this line of argument, one is, perhaps, justified in taking the word "Fig" to mean the world famous Bodhi Briksha, or Bo-tree, "the oldest historical tree in the world," and the most revered, of a sanctity no less than that attaching to Mount Sinai or the Olive branch. It is the tree under which Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, received his Buddha-hood. This is no far-fetched interpretation ; nay, it is the only reasonable one in view of the

argument and assertions contained in the chapter. The Bo-tree, moreover, is of the fig species, its botanical name being *Ficus religiosa*.

From all this discussion one can safely conclude that Buddhism has been noticed in the Qur-án, as indeed it must have been, seeing that, from this numerical point of view, it was the greatest religion of the time.

But there is something more in the name of Buddha. *Buddha* is not the personal name of the sage, which is Gautama. "Buddha" is his attributive name, meaning "the enlightened," a term parallel to *Nabi* or *Rasul* in Hebrew and Arabic.

Man is generally in the dark as to the will of God, that is to say, the true ways of life, the knowledge of which enables him to realise the existence of God. He cannot find out these ways by his own intellectual efforts; nevertheless, to certain types of men, who have the needful spiritual predisposition and culture, God, of His own accord, and in view of the requirements of the age and people, from time to time, reveals His will. The men, to whom the will of the Lord is thus revealed, are most assuredly "the enlightened," such to whom the light comes direct. The multitude of others who follow these men and become virtuous enough to walk in the light of truth, are, no doubt, also enlightened in their degree, but their enlightenment is borrowed, it is a reflected light. The word *Nabi* in the Arabic language has the same significance, that is, one who comes to know the will of the Lord with regard to man direct from God. So the claim of the Buddha was the same as that of the Prophet of Islam, or of those of Judaism. So also while talking of this sage of the East we should say—Gautama, the Buddha, in the same way as we say Muhammad, the Prophet; or Buddha Gautama as we say the Prophet Muhammad, the latter being the more appropriate of the

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two. It is interesting to note that Gautama does not arrogate any exclusive Buddha-hood for himself. He claims to be the last of a series of Buddhas, seven in number, and, according to some authorities even twenty-four. We are told on the authority of Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids that "the earliest and the shortest list" of these Buddhas, "may reach back nearly, if not quite, to the time of the Buddha." It is clear from this that Gautama really claimed to be one of the many Buddhas that had appeared before him; and this is in perfect harmony with the implications of the Qur-anic verse, which I discussed in the beginning. India is an ancient land of civilization, and needed, indeed, a series of "Buddhas" or prophets in the long course of its history. I have no access to the original documents, but I wonder if the names of Rama and Krishna are included in the list. We are told that the *Buddha Vainsa* or "History of the Buddhas" gives the names of the twenty-four Buddhas, and that the Pali commentary on the *Jatakas* gives certain details regarding each of the twenty-four. It is high time that some Muslim scholar made a study of this subject, and gave us further material for the discussion of this matter.

But there is a more important point than this, towards which a Muslim scholar, having access to the original sources, could turn his attention with advantage, and this is with regard to a prophecy of Buddha Gautama about the Buddha that would follow him, and whose name would be Metteyya. For myself, seeing everything in the light of Islamic teaching, I regard Buddha Gautama as holding the same position in the religious history of the Hindu race as Jesus did in that of the Jews. He was the last of the *national* prophets of India; he was born at a time when the Indian nation, along with other nations of the world, was feeling an inner urge for an international religion; his teachings, like those of Jesus, must, therefore, have contained a strong and unprecedented international

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leaven. Or else, being a reformatory movement of the exclusively national religion of Hinduism, it could not have found the congenial response which it did in foreign people. It is necessary to bear in mind in this connection that although Buddhism had its glorious days in India, it was more popular among the non-Aryans and the down-trodden than among the high-bred Aryan Hindus. In every respect, therefore, Buddhism may be said to have played the same part in the history of Hinduism as did Christianity with respect to Judaism, and the reason is obvious. Each of them emerged in its respective community, when that community was at the end of its exclusive national existence and entering upon a period of one more international existence.

Seeing all this, a Muslim is tempted to expect to find some sort of prophecy recorded in Buddhist scriptures as to the advent of the great World-Prophet, whose way he had come, so to say, to prepare like the prophecies of Jesus concerning the Comforter in the Gospel of John (Ch. 16). The basis of this Muslim hope lies in a verse of the Holy Qur-án, which reads :—

And when Allah made a covenant through the prophets ; certainly what I have given you of Book and wisdom—then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must aid him. He said : Do you affirm and accept My compact in this (matter) ? They said : We do affirm. He said : Then bear witness, and I (too) am of the bearers of witness with you.<sup>1</sup>

According to this verse every prophet in the past must have done something to facilitate the recognition and reception of this World-Prophet by his people. And since this task was all the more incumbent upon those who were immediately before him in appearance, Buddha being one such, a Muslim is naturally anxious to know if any such prophecy can be found in the existing Buddhist scriptures. He has discovered this kind of prophecy in

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 3 : 80.

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the Old and the New Testaments, in the Vedas, in the Upanishadas and in the Zoroastrian Scriptures. Buddhism being more historical than some of the religions for which these scriptures stand, and stronger in influence than others, it is thought that its scriptures must contain similar, if not clearer, prophecies. And one is, indeed, reassured in this hope, on learning that *Digha Nikaya*, one of the oldest documents of Buddhist doctrines, mentions the name of the *Buddha of the Future*, who, when the religion of Gautama shall have been forgotten, will again reveal the path to men. His name is given as Metteyya (Sanskrit—Maitreya) Buddha, or the Buddha of kindness or benevolence. A Muslim is at once reminded of a verse in the Holy Qur-án regarding the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

And We have not sent you but as a mercy to (all) the nations.<sup>1</sup>

The personal name of Maitreya is said to be "Ajita," meaning "unconquerable." To a Muslim the name is suggestive of another aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's appearance, which is described in the Qur-án in its following verse :

He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion, *that He may make it overcome the religions, all of them*, though the polythiests may be averse.<sup>2</sup>

It should be remembered that this doctrine of Maitreya Buddha forms part of the Hinayana, or Little Vehicle system of Buddhism, which is the old and orthodox school of thought, based on the teachings of the Pitakas, as distinguished from the later school called the Mahayana or the Great Vehicle.

Unfortunately, as I have confessed, I have no access to the original sources. If I had known Pali and had before me the actual words of the description given of the Maitreya Buddha, I am sure I could throw a far fuller and clearer light on the subject than in this article I have been able to do.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 21 : 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 61 : 9.

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As has been pointed out by several writers in these pages, there is as brilliant a prospect for Islam in the Far East as in the West. If Christianity sways the mind of the West, Buddhism does likewise in the Far East. Therefore to open up a field for Islam in the Far East, we must study Buddhism and the mind it has produced with the same amount of diligence as we have brought to the understanding of Christianity and the Christian mind.

I intend to take up this subject in real earnest, but so as to be able to do justice to it, I need the co-operation of any friends who may have access to the original scriptures of Buddhism.

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### WAS MUHAMMAD A WARRIOR ?

BY SYED MUHAMMAD SAYEEDULLA

A Christian's conception of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is that of a warlike and fierce man, leading a body of bellicose Arabs, mounted on fleet camels, sweeping down on a tribe, and, having conquered them, forcing them to embrace Islam at the point of the sword. Imbrued in this idea, Christians never stir themselves to examine whether there is any historic ground justifying their adherence to this opinion. What manner of reception would be meted out to Muhammad if he were to descend upon us to preach Islam to-day, it is hard to delineate. There is, however, less chance of Muhammad's having recourse to the sword, in order to defend himself, as his audience would be civilised enough not to murder one whose teachings might sound foreign to them.

It is idle, indeed, to compare the mentality of the seventh century Arabs to that of the modern nations, and to criticise the exponent of the Muslim faith without making any effort to visualise the conditions prevailing during his time. When one reads the life of the Holy

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Prophet Muhammad one should wear the eyes and ears of the seventh century in one's head in order to understand and appreciate his great personality.

Muhammad was born in Mecca about the year 570 A. C. in considerable poverty. For forty years he lived the life of a trader. He married, at the age of twenty-five, an elderly Meccan lady of great wealth, culture and charm. As the husband of a prosperous wife he lived a comfortable and peaceful life.

At the age of forty Muhammad began to talk about the unity and reality of God, at first, only to the members of his household. After a few years the new religion began to flourish ; Muhammad began to preach, with considerable effect, openly. The heathen Meccans decreed that Muhammad must die. Therefore men from every family, excepting, of course, his own, were chosen to murder him, so that the odium and revenge might be divided, and the guilt of violating the sanctuary of Mecca be shared by all. But already the seed of the new religion had been germinating in the more acceptable soil of the city of Medina. The inhabitants who had been taught the beautiful things about the new religion by Muhammad's agents, eagerly invited him to come and preach there. There he, with his faithful companions, arrived, and was received with great enthusiasm. The inhabitants of Medina took upon themselves the task of defending the Messenger of God with their lives, wealth and families.

At the age of fifty-three Muhammad found himself at the head of a small kingdom without any army. Had Muhammad been bubbling with vengeance, his first and foremost concern would have been to raise a powerful army and to attack the Meccans. But although an Arab—an Arab of the seventh century—Muhammad appears to have expressed reluctance to going out to fight at the field of Badr. " Fighting is enjoined on you, and it is

an object of dislike to you ; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows while you do not know." This was the command he received from God while he was hesitating to give fight to the Meccans. A Muslim is not an absolute pacifist, and the true Islamic principle of war, as given in the Holy Qur-án, is "fight against those who fight against you, but do not originate hostility. Truly Allah loves not the aggressors." Well ! Muhammad and his followers have received the Divine command to fight. One would have thought that Muhammad, armed with the Divine command to fight, would have indulged in all the savagery and brutality of war, but it was not so with Muhammad ! He was no longer a private individual, who is free to indulge in anything, but, now, he was the spiritual leader and governor of a community, to which he was sent by God for guidance. The inhabitants of Medina proved to be exactly what Muhammad expected them to be, and there was a hope for their betterment and reformation. And Muhammad had implicit faith in Allah that He will protect His people on the battlefield.

With a scanty and hurriedly raised force Muhammad went out to meet the grand Meccan army at the field of Badr. It should be noted that Badr is situated at a distance of about 80 miles from Medina and over 120 from Mecca. One cannot say that Muhammad was an aggressor. But the Meccans sustained defeat. As soon as the enemy gave in Muhammad ordered his followers to cease fighting and treat the prisoners kindly—which was a novel thing in Arabia. On the other hand, when the Muslims met with a reprisal at the battle of Uhud, which lies at a distance of 3 miles from Medina, the Meccans, so it is said, danced over the bodies of the fallen Muslims,—mutilating them and kicking their heads ; even the women, in their exultation, adorned their breasts with necklaces of ears

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and noses of the victims, strung together. Such was the human society of Arabia, and Muhammad and his followers stood out alone as the most kind-hearted and the most just in war.

While the Prophet was engaged in putting down risings in the neighbourhood of Medina, in order "to exterminate war for good," the Meccans raised a mighty force and invited the Jews to join hands with them.

The Jews of Arabia had been watching the rise of Islam with great concern, and, when this offer from Mecca came, they were only too glad to co-operate with them, so that they may, for good and all, stamp out the growing power of Medina.

The news of the overwhelming Meccan army marching to Medina reached the Prophet, and, without losing time, he hurriedly took counsel with his followers as to the best means of confronting such a grand array. A Persian convert suggested that Medina should be fortified by a deep and broad trench all round it. The inhabitants of Medina, under the supervision of Muhammad, working day and night, completed the trench before the enemy was sighted. This new phenomenon, at once striking the savage Meccans as an unsportsmanlike gesture, sent them round furiously searching for an opening. Unsuccessful and tired out they pitched camp on the bank of the trench—uttering threats and wholesale massacre if only they gained the city. They remained there for some time, now and then discharging a volley of arrows or throwing spears at the houses, within which the faithful were ensconced. Soon the rains broke out and, finding camp life unsuitable, the Meccans receded to their various districts without giving battle.

The Jewish community was allowed to settle in Khai-bar, near Medina. They were enjoying all the benefits of a progressive administration under Muhammad, and

practising their religion unmolested. Nevertheless, their full support and sympathy lay with the Meccans. Moreover, they were united with the Meccans in a common cause—the stamping out of the Muslims. These Jews treacherously attacked the Muslims of Medina, but were utterly routed. Those who were taken prisoners were sent up for trial and were allowed to choose their own judge among the Muslims. Instead of throwing themselves on the Prophet's mercy, they chose a man whom they expected to favour them, who, however, condemned them all to death. The principal thing to be noted here is that this is the only instance of extreme severity being meted out not to avowed enemies but to treacherous allies.

When Muhammad entered Mecca there was no blood-shed. General amnesty was proclaimed, and the slaves were liberated. The Meccans, who had contrived to murder the Prophet before, touched by his large-heartedness, embraced Islam to a man.

This was the greatest triumph of the Prophet, and now, at the age of sixty-two, he became the ruler of the entire Arabian peninsula.

So we find that far from being a fierce and warlike man Muhammad had the greatest abhorrence for warfare, and that had he not been called by a sense of duty towards those who had placed their everything, even their very lives, under his charge, he would never have asked anyone to raise his sword against his fellow human beings.

But Muhammad's coming to the field of battle was fraught with a great good for humanity. It showed for the first time in the history of humanity, and perhaps for the last time too, that there can be such a thing as humane and conscientious warfare. Fighting in self-defence, he showed to the world to what length a man can go in forgiving his vanquished enemies, who were also the sworn enemies of virtue, purity and orderliness.

## THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

### THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

By S. M. RAHMAN, M. L. C.

In order to forecast or visualize the future of religion, a short retrospect of its past, together with a survey of the present stage of its development, seems necessary.

Change—eternal, imperceptible change—being the very breath of Life, the one immutable law governing the “myriad manifestations” of this mutable Universe, it was impossible for religion to have remained unchanged. “When from the tiny Alga, swimming in its pond, to the orchid, from the atom of matter to the star, from the worm to the human being, from Niagara Falls to the Alps, from the primitive Bushman to the modern Yankee all was evolved,” how could the “religious faculty” of man, who is the most fickle of the fickle creation, escape the hand of Time?

Even a cursory study of religious history makes it abundantly clear that the primordial germs of religion were present in the mind of the primitive man. Man of the Stone Age believed in a vague supernatural power. “It is an old opinion,” says Professor Leuba in his *Psychological Study of Religion*, “that even the lowest savage entertains a belief in a Supreme Being, however dimly conceived. Although this opinion suffered temporary discredit from the discovery that, in several instances, the alleged monotheistic beliefs really proceeded from the teachings of missionaries, recent anthropological researches furnish sufficient evidence to warrant a return to the view.” The nebula of primitive religion is found amongst the earliest negrito races, the Melanesians and Australians. The Animism of the Indian aborigines is a later development in which the inborn “religious sense” of man begins to manifest itself in grotesque gods and grotesque ritual. The beliefs, in the beginning, are

ridiculous. The Negroids of the Andamans, for example, believe that their god Puluga lives in the sky in a stone house, with a wife and children. The mental processes of a Hottentot or Kaffir can bear no relation to the reasoning of a Plato or Augustine, a Sri Krishna, or Imam Ghizzali. Religion and civilization being thus closely interlinked, an advance in one inevitably brings about an advance in the other. The intellectual progress of man leads to an amelioration of his religion, to an elevation in his faith. A very ignorant people, by virtue of their ignorance, incline towards a religion full of marvels. We may as well expect that seed should quicken in the barren rock as that a philosophical religion should be established among savages. With the spread of enlightenment it begins to assume a rational basis. People habituate themselves to the practice of doubting, which is the starting point of all human progress. Miracles and marvels cease to have the same appeal, and medicine-men and wizards disappear. Even the priests, a class of men set aside and supported to preserve the continuity of ritual and tradition, are gradually divested of their sacerdotal importance, and the "religious sense" of man is completely transformed. Religion which originated in constant fear of a Supreme Power, always ready to hurl punishment on the erring individual, establishes itself on a new, but a sociological basis.

It is this sociological basis of religion which has enabled it, throughout the ages, to survive the onslaughts made upon it. While the heavens themselves are silent, thousands of pens and tongues are pleading for the retention of a Deity. In spite of the bitter conflict of Science and Religion, of Philosophy and Ritual, the belief in a Supreme Being, in an All-pervading Providence, endures. Notwithstanding the attempts to annihilate Islam, exterminate Christianity, uproot Buddhism, and extirpate Hinduism, all these great religions still claim teeming millions as their votaries.

## THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

Apart from the innate "religious faculty" of man, experience has proved that religion is the most effective sanction for the salvation of society—for saving it from chaos. Spiritual sanctions triumph where the laws of ethics and the State miserably fail. Their arms are too short to reach the innermost recesses of man's heart.

The future of religion is often painted as being dark and without hope, yet signs are not wanting to indicate that if it will but adjust itself to its altered environments—and all the great religions of the world are capable of so doing—if the trammels of rite and ritual are loosened, and its progress keep pace with the intellectual advance of mankind, nothing is more certain than that it will pass unscathed, through the ordeal of materialism, which is its portion to-day. The crucible of the Great War has completely transmuted our values and view-points. They have undergone such a transformation as could never have been dreamed of in the comparatively halcyon days of our fathers. Time-honoured institutions are crumbling, and the cry is all for something new, for a new life and a new order of things. If the great religions of the world fail to reckon with the spirit of this age—the spirit of toleration and catholicity—and neglect to free themselves from the bigotry and fanaticism which are the direct outcome of sacerdotal ascendancy, they will be banished from the confines of civilization. If Priesthood elects to ignore the lessons of Russia and Turkey, it will do so at its peril. Anything that comes in the way of the cultural development of man is bound to be crushed.

The one unfailing test which the modern man is applying to religion is the test of utility. Religion must not obstruct progress, it must not impede mankind in its onward march to the goal of human happiness. What the world requires to-day is not a conglomeration of warring creeds, but a Federation of Faiths for the peace and uplift of harassed humanity.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### TWENTY YEARS AGO<sup>1</sup>

#### OUR DUTY TO ANIMALS

In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 4 last a paragraph appeared containing the following :—

“The Bishop of Oxford has vetoed prayers in his diocese for the animals engaged in the war. He says it has ‘never been the custom of the Church to pray for any other beings than those whom we think of as rational.’”

The writer in the *Gazette* gives his own views thus : “The horses and dogs being used in the war are as brave, faithful, and devoted as any soldier, and no Christian need feel ashamed of asking the Father of All to have them in His keeping. And it smacks of spiritual ‘snobbery’ to assume that the providence of the Creator has its limits drawn immediately beneath our own species.” How often do we have to draw attention to the fact that many Christians are *better* than their creed ? The ideas and aspirations of the people are far higher than the man-made teachings of this religion. On the one side the Bishop will not allow people to pray for the animals ; and one may ask : Who is the Bishop, and who, pray, has given to *him* the power to prevent people from being humane ? Oh ! what a pity it is that Jesus never lived to devote his time to consolidating his teachings, that he never wrote a single word of the New Testament. If we had the genuine teachings of Jesus himself we could argue the point more fully, for Jesus was a prophet of Allah, and it is a matter of regret to all that we know nothing of what he really did preach. We find everywhere to-day that the dogmas and doctrines of Christianity fall far below our common human ideals, that our minds are greater than the narrow limits of this concoction of priest-craft. We know that slavery was most rampant at the time of Jesus who encouraged slavery if we take the evidence of the New Testament ; that the war lust was also strong, and he said that he was come to bring a sword ; that drunkenness was a widespread curse, yet he turned water into wine, and mixed with such questionable characters as “wine-bibbers,” “gluttons,” “magdalens” (which is but a word for prostitute) ; that he liked the company of “publicans and sinners.” that he believed in sicknesses being caused through “devils.” This is, of course, if we take the New Testament as our biography of such a character. How wicked it is if we do so. The essential things in life he left alone, he told us abstract formulae, he gave us irrational modes of conduct ; but as a code for life, the Testaments, both Old and New, are valueless....

I have spoken of the creed which gives no direction ; shall I venture to point out a religion which gives a complete code for everything in life ? Let me first of all quote the words of the

<sup>1</sup> *Islamic Review*, February, 1915.

## ISLAM AND THEOSOPHY

Holy Qur-án and ask the Bishop, all Christians, and all lovers of animals to give them attention. In Sura 6 we read : "There is no beast on earth, nor bird which flyeth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you, and unto the Lord shall they return." My friends, ponder this well.

In the Bible you have no guide, and as I fully believe that you are sensible, rational folk, who are open to be convinced, just think a little : which is the true guide, the Book which is silent or the Book which speaks ?

Our Holy Prophet has given us many injunctions as to our treatment of animals. He was once asked : "Verily are there rewards for our doing good to quadrupeds, and giving them water to drink ?" Lord Muhammad replied : "there are rewards for benefiting every animal having a moist liver" (*i.e.*, every one alive). Thus a Muslim must do good to those creatures who were created by God, as he was. Again, our Holy Prophet (on whom be peace !) said : "Fear God, in these dumb animals, and ride them when they are fit to be ridden, and get off them when they are tired." Here is a command which one must follow, and so one would become considerate towards a faithful beast.....

Islam teaches us love for all God's creatures, making no distinctions, and thus the question of prayer for animals would never need to be discussed, whilst in that faulty and incomplete system of religion which is called Christianity the very fact that it needs the decision of the Bishop shows clearly that it is not a Divine but a human religion.

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## ISLAM AND THEOSOPHY

[We gladly print this article in that it calls for a closer co-operation between us Muslims and Theosophists. It would interest our correspondent to know that the credit of giving lead to the world in this direction goes only to the Qur-án.

The Theosophical Society has, however, admittedly taken to itself such religious conceptions of life for its pattern as are human in origin and have suffered from the ravages of time. And in this alone it has erred. If it wishes to be of any real service to mankind, let it devote a greater attention, than has been the case heretofore, to the Holy Qur-án and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.—ED. R. I.]

The article on *Theosophy and Islam* in the *Islamic Review* for September 1934 aroused in me some thoughts and reflections which may not be without interest and value to some others.

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First of all, it will be well to make clear my own personal attitude and feeling in the matter. I am not, at present, a member of the Theosophical Society, not because I do not highly value such association, but because for the last few years circumstances have made it impossible for me to take part in the work of the organization. I am, however, still a Theosophist—it is one of the things one cannot “un-be” if one has ever really been one. It is not dependent on membership in an organization, but is rather a view of life that has been gained, a state of evolution that has been reached.

The Theosophical Society was founded, as I see it, primarily for the purpose of providing a meeting-ground and vehicle for those who are earnest, open-minded and without ulterior motive in their search for truth. Ideally, therefore, each member should constantly recognize the God he knows in all the infinite manifestations of Life and at the same time be constantly eager and alert to enlarge his concept of God through gaining an understanding of other views of Him.

However, the majority of people who join the Theosophical Society are still some distance removed from adeptship and bring into it not only their high purpose and ardent aspiration, but also their human frailties and limitations. The result is inevitable and evident in the history of the Society. Fortunately there have so far always been among its members enough great and wise souls who could recognize the underlying unity of purpose and aspiration, amid the dust-clouds of dissension, to hold the Society to the essential purpose. It has been my observation that those who “stick” in spite of personal hurts and differences do gain a very real understanding of the principles of real brotherhood and develop the power of putting it into practice.

The article in the *Islamic Review* is brotherly, in that it gives evidence that time and effort were put into correcting

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the partial view of truth held by the writer of a Theosophical article. If I am inclined to find any fault with it at all it is that it was not sent to a Theosophical publication. Since I did happen to read, may I undertake to answer it ?

It is true that the Theosophical Society has stressed the Buddhist interpretation of God and life. This it seems to me, is not due to discrimination against other religions but to be the outcome of certain conditions and understandable causes.

The immediate task which confronted the Society after its organization was the " clearing up " of the conflict between religion and science which was holding in rigid bondage the minds and hearts of men in the western world. In order to accomplish this it was necessary to re-establish the relationship of Christianity with the eastern religions. The temper of that time being strongly intellectual and philosophic it was only natural to begin the attempt at such approachment with Buddhism which is, I believe, generally conceded to be the most perfect philosophical presentation of religious truth. Besides European scholars and writers had already aroused the interest of the west in Buddhism. To admit that Buddhism excels other religions as a philosophic presentation implies not the slightest disparagement of any other. Every religion stresses and excels in some particular quality. That, from a Theosophical view-point, is the reason so many religions were given to the world.

It is also true, I believe, though I have no statistics available, that a greater number of Buddhists than representatives of other religions responded to the invitation of the Society and were active in its ranks. Inevitably they coloured the expression of the Society by their own point of view. To this extent it has proved detrimental, and it is quite possible that there may be danger of over-crystallization of Theosophic truths in the now-accepted

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pattern. This, I believe, can only be remedied by having members of the heretofore "neglected" religious work in and with the Society and give to it some of their own particular "colour."

It is a tragic paradox that human beings have so universally tended to interpret the one fundamental Truth that there is no God but God to mean that there is no God but their own particular concept of Him, and to feel called upon to convert all the world to their own views and beliefs. This fanaticism, as we know, inspired horribly cruel deeds, and for a long stretch of time prevented the spread of the knowledge of the wisdom, which results only from honest effort to understand varying concepts of God and the discovery of their essential unity. It is true, of course, that segregation into groups of "like-believers" was, and to some extent, still is, necessary. We all, at times, need shelter and opportunity for recreation and growth. But "the time of the realization of the world's brotherhood is upon us" and we can no more tolerate enmity and hate between such groups.

As to the specific statement of a Theosophical writer which called forth the comment in the *Islamic Review*, I doubt that it will ever be possible to determine the exact degree of fanaticism of which "Christianity" and "Muhammadanism" were respectively and relatively guilty. Personally, I incline to favour the latter, but that may be because the church has never been over kind to me. But does it really matter? The important thing, it seems to me, is not to determine who was less or more fanatical but to cease being fanatic.

A great and wise Muslim once put into beautiful words the essence of that which I have so imperfectly succeeded in expressing :

Oh God, in every temple I see people who seek Thee,  
And in every language I hear spoken people praise Thee.

Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee,  
Each religion says, "Thou art One without equal."

## CORRESPONDENCE

If it be a mosque people murmur the holy prayers,  
If it be a Christian church people ring the bell from love to Thee.  
Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, sometimes the  
mosque,  
But it is Thee Whom I seek from temple to temple.  
Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy,  
For neither stands behind the screen of Thy Truth.  
Heresy to the heretic and religion to the orthodox,  
But the dust of the rose-petals belongs to the heart of the per-  
fume seller.

These are the words of Abul Fazl, written in the time of the reign of Akbar. If something of the spirit and wisdom which inspired them survives in the hearts of the followers of Islam to-day it should not be very difficult for them and Theosophists to understand one another.

If Theosophy fails to give proper interpretation and emphasis to Islamic teachings it may be partially due to lack of interest, indifference and pre-occupation of Theosophists. For these, I know, they stand ready to make apology. But if the situation is to be remedied they must have the support and co-operation of the followers of Islam.

E. D. S.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

HIGHGATE, LONDON.

THE IMAM,  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

For the last four months I have been a constant visitor to our local library in Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, N. I have been much interested in your journal the *Islamic Review*, so much so that I have borrowed the Qur-án from the library to study it. Its contents appeal to me greatly; the more so as I was brought up in the Protestant Religion. I subsequently became a Roman Catholic, which creed I had to relinquish for many reasons, one of them being that I was disgusted with its ritualism. Besides, I yearned for something more spiritual.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Your *Review* I read through quite a number of times as it wants a lot of thinking. I find you have a long list of publications issued for non-Muslims, and I am impelled to write to you to find out if you can let me have the following books : *Muhammad and Jesus*, *The Existence of God* and *The Ideal Prophet*. I would also appreciate if I could read *The Sources of Christianity*.

If you can help me in this spiritual search for something tangible in life's pathway, you will be giving my sojourn on this earth a purpose, some hope and goal for attainment.

I firmly believe we each have our guides or angels to direct our steps, but how seldom can they show us the way through our blind materialism ?

Tusting that my few lines will bring me an early reply and assuring you of my earnestness.

Yours in Friendship, Love and Truth,

G. J. R.

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THE EDITOR,

*The Islamic Review*, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

TACOMA,

U. S. A.

Considerable surprise and some amusement has been caused by the statement that in future Unitarians will not be allowed to speak in the great new Episcopal Cathedral in Liverpool, England. I visited this great edifice (second only to St. Peter's in Rome) four years ago on our "Whirl Around the World," and while not a member of that faith I take a friendly interest in all institutions which tend to the betterment of mankind, irrespective of creed.

The question arises if Unitarians of the present generation are debarred, where will the Church draw the line ? It is certain that all of the old Hebrew prophets and seers taught only the Unity of God.

Jesus was a Hebrew, lived and died in that faith. His simple creed embraced only the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as evidenced by his statement to the rich young man who desired to become a disciple. "Call me not good," he told his followers, "there is none good but God."

H. G. Wells says that Paul was the real founder of Christianity. Wells draws a vivid picture between the simple teachings of the early Church and the elaborate definitions which marked the Nicene Creed in 325 A. C. held under the auspices of a Roman Emperor, Constantine.

Jesus knew nothing of vicarious atonement, immaculate conception and the other gew-gaws of the Paganized institution which bears his name.

## CORRESPONDENCE

In America we find Unitarians among our greatest and most honoured citizens. As Dr. Putman says there are more Unitarians—a thousand to one—outside of the Unitarian organisation than inside of it. Thomas Jefferson, one of America's greatest statesmen Presidents was a Unitarian. He wrote and spoke contemptuously of the grotesque doctrine of the "Trinity." The word "Trinity" by the way, first appeared in the third century and its author Tertullian defended the idea because it was "an absurdity" to think of God having a son. He forgot that Pagan history is full of Divine fathers.

Unitarianism in America produced poets like Bryant, the two Longfellows, Lowell and Holmes. Motley, whose history of the Dutch Republic is a literary gem, was a Unitarian, and a number of other able writers who while affiliated with the so-called Orthodox Churches were Unitarian in belief.

Sometime ago I heard a San Francisco Episcopal minister say : " Some people ridicule the Socialists, Unitarians and Universalists, but all parties are drawing from the Socialists. Great numbers of Unitarians are in our pulpits, and everybody is beginning to realize that God was not foolish enough to make man destroy Him."

We fear that if the travel-stained Son of Man, who had not where to lay his head, appeared at any of the so-called Christian Churches he would receive scant welcome although we once knew ministers in Liverpool who were liberal in creed.

Yours sincerely,  
J. A. SPROULE.

[The Unitarians are not looked upon as Christians by the members of the Church of England. A Unitarian has more in common with us Muslims than with the so-called Christians. A Unitarian, like us Muslims, does not countenance ordained priesthood. The Unitarians are fighting a losing battle, and their only safety lies in joining hands with Muslims.—ED. *I. R.*]

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STOW MARKET, SUFFOLK.

THE EDITOR,  
*The Islamic Review*, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

A copy of the *Islamic Review* for July was given to me by a friend, and the article "Inquiry into the Unknown" particularly interested me.

I noticed that Mr. Abdul Majid, speaking at the Golders Green Spiritualist Church, in answer to a question said he did not think that healing and Spiritualism had any connection.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Unfortunately the medical aspect of Spiritualism has been greatly neglected, and this neglect is undoubtedly the reason why so little is known of healing which is accomplished by spirit agency through mediums. I should like to refer Mr. Majid to a work by Dr. Carl Wickland of California entitled *Thirty Years Among the Dead*. Dr. Wickland has specialised in the type of mental disorder known as "Obsession," and in his researches has been assisted by his wife who is a powerful medium.

In this way the author has succeeded in removing from his patients earth-bound spirits who found they could get in contact with the life they had left by haunting sensitive people. Messages received from spirit doctors through mediums state that 70 per cent. of the inmates of asylums are victims of undeveloped spirits who are the cause of the apparent insanity.

Dr. Kilner, late of St. Thomas' Hospital, London, also indicated the importance of Spiritualism, although not himself a Spiritualist. Dr. Kilner was able by special screens of his own invention to photograph the human aura, and with data thus obtained found that it was a definite aid to diagnosis. It is interesting to note that the aura visible through the Kilner screens agreed with that described by clairvoyants.

I have had considerable experience of healing by spirit agency, and was very pleased to learn that Muslims are in complete sympathy with research for further knowledge of the Unknown.

To your readers I would commend *Healing by Spirit Agency* by Saunders. This book describes the communication and healing cases accomplished by the direction of Abdul Latif, a celebrated Persian doctor of the twelfth or thirteenth century. An orthodox medical man would, I think, fail to realise the importance of this work unless he has knowledge of, and sympathy with, Spiritualism.

My work of healing has always without exception been carried out in the missionary spirit by which I mean to convey that I am not financially interested and never charge a fee. I cannot claim success with every case I have attended, but it has been completely proved to my satisfaction that the claim so often put forward by doctors that only functional diseases are amenable to spiritual healing is quite wrong.

It is desired, however, by spirit-healers in the Life Beyond that they should co-operate with our earth doctors, but before this can be realised in the degree that is desirable there must be an effort to learn from our material plane so that the student can know of the Invisible Forces that are behind every function of the human body and, in fact, throughout nature.

I am convinced that research into the medical side of Spiritualism will put much greater power into the hands of

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doctors to treat disease and, what is of greater importance, prevent it. It must be remembered by all engaged in psychic research that one must have an absolutely open mind, and material knowledge cannot pronounce on spiritual knowledge as the latter is the result of often many years of development.

Yours faithfully,  
ARTHUR BARKER.

[It would interest our correspondent to know that Maulvi Abdul Majid was attaching a signification to the word "Spiritualism" which is as yet not given to it. He understands by *Spiritualism* "spiritual illumination." We Muslims do not deny the existence of healing powers in spiritually illumined persons, but it is not essential that it should always be so. We have known people possessing healing powers yet far removed from spiritual illumination.—ED. R. I.]

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DEAR MAULVIE ABDUL MAJID,

LONDON, N. W. 3.

In the last issue of the *Islamic Review* there appeared an article on *Theosophy and Islam*, in which the views of Theosophy towards your great religion are somewhat misrepresented. The author quotes from a magazine called *Theosophy*. I brought the article in question to the notice of the General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England, and below is her answer :—

"The magazine *Theosophy* which is mentioned is one that is issued in California by a very small group of people, and it is rather regrettable that it is quoted as being representative of our views. As you know, Dr. Besant and Mr. Jinarajadasa have been keenly interested in Islam, and our Society has issued several books showing Islam in the most favourable light."

I wonder whether you could bring this to the notice of the Editor of the *Islamic Review*.

Yours very sincerely,  
C. TAYLOR.

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## UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

BY FAZAL-UL-KARIM

The subject of Universal Brotherhood has for a long time past been under discussion by the mighty minds of the West and the East, and various means and ways

covering the guiding principles are being conceived to ensure the establishment of "Universal Brotherhood" that will knit together the various nationalities of the world irrespective of caste, creed, and colour into a cord of perpetual fraternity. A possible potentiality is no proof of actuality. The mighty minds, that are so nobly inspired to pledge their whole heart and soul in devising means and measures whereby the entire humanity may be linked in a bond of genuine fraternity inspite of diversity of religious beliefs professed by the heterogeneous units of humanity, should for a moment deliberate if such a dream can ever come within the range of possibility.

The genuine spirit of brotherhood will reign only when universality of religion is established, and this is not possible until religion comes within our true conception. It is more expedient at the present time to think of means for engulfing the differences that exist among the nations professing different religions.

The scientific minds now admit the existence of some laws that guide the Universe which, according to them, is not a haphazard product. But belief in the existence of these laws entails as a natural consequence belief in the existence of a Supreme Power—the Maker of these laws. The Holy Qurán styles that Supreme Power as *Rab*, signifying Evolver, Cherisher and Creator. His are the laws that control Nature. These laws are exact, precise and unalterable. Their exactitude conveys to our mind the idea of the Unity of God.

Belief in the Unity of God creates in our mind the idea of the equality of man. Does any nation or race enjoy His physical dispensations more than the other? Nay, His physical dispensations equally benefit every nation. When we fail to notice any inequality in His physical dispensations how can it be possible that He should have deviated from

## UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

this principle of equality in respect of His spiritual dispensations which are so important in the way of development and evolution of human consciousness ? Religion is synonymous with His spiritual dispensations. Belief in the immutability of His laws and dispensations is the natural sequence of the belief in the Unity of God. As we believe in the immutability of the fundamental principles of religion, why should we tolerate the disparities in religion ? Heart, it is said, is the repository of all human ambitions, aspirations, thoughts and ideas ; it is there that hate and envy, malice and mercy spring. Is it possible to create therein genuine sentiment of brotherhood if beliefs in respect of religion differ ? We should, therefore, harmonize our beliefs and adopt a universal religion which may be acceptable to all, and thus visualise the universal brotherhood.

Along with the evolution of our consciousness we should not believe in a creed that does not recognize the Divine origin of other creeds. The exclusive characteristics of Divine revelations endangers the very foundation of peace and brotherhood. The idea of brotherhood will remain unrealised if the creeds we follow are so different in their character and attitude towards each other. Belief in a creed which denies the Divine origin of other creeds would not only be detractive of the Divine wisdom, but would also be the cause of hatred and misunderstanding among the various nationalities of the world ?

The message in the Holy Qur-án with reference to all the existing creeds is unique in this respect. It runs thus : "To every nation was given a Divine messenger," and again "all creeds have Divine origin." The Book brought a message which is compatible with our knowledge and is highly conducive to the establishment of the Universal Brotherhood. The Qur-án makes it obligatory for Muslims to recognize, respect and accept as Divine Messengers all

the other prophets in the same way as Muhammad. It says that all the prophets came with the same religion from God, but their teachings owing to lapse of time suffered in purity and became intermixed with falsehood, and this accounts for the difference between religion and religion. God raised different prophets to preach religion to different groups of humanity, separated from each other by natural barriers, at a time when there were hardly any means of communication between the various nations of the world.

But now is the proper time for the world to follow one and the same creed in the interest of peace and brotherhood which at present are needed more than ever. The Holy Qur-án explains the causes of the existing differences of religions and invites the peoples of the world to accept Islam. It recapitulates all the previously revealed books. It terms its creed as *Islam*, signifying obedience to the laws of Nature, and thus rejects the idea of calling the religion of God after the name of its inspired teacher.

Religion is not an institution simply for the purpose of pleasing God and receiving His favour, or appeasing His anger through various rituals and sacrifices, offerings and prayers. Religion should be indicative of some principles for raising and elevating our consciousness to perfection from the abyss of corruption. The Qur-án gives the same goal of religion, *i.e.*, to bring about the development of that potentiality which is latent in man. We possess certain aptitudes and capabilities, and it is to bring them to perfection that religion has been vouchsafed to us. The transmutation of the baser self into a noble one is the grand object of religion, and this can be achieved by devoted obedience to His laws. The Qur-án brings only to light certain affirmative and negative laws. For the further development of our consciousness we are urged to follow the affirmative laws. Negative laws

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are prohibitive in nature. We are to avoid certain things and practices that germinate evil passions and thoughts in us. The Book does not mean to crush our passions altogether because they are natural, but it designs to regulate and sublimate the root passions in us—anger, lust, and cognate passions—into Divine morals.

Along with the belief in the existence of God, faith in Divine messengership becomes indispensable. Laws for our moral and spiritual uplift must not come through human counsel, but through the medium of a Divinely inspired teacher.

Belief in the Omniscience of God conveys the laws beyond imputations as to its soundness. Belief in the Unity of God means Unity of the Source of the laws. Why should we differ in this point? Evidently then, believers become recipients of the laws designed to mould human character. "Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought." (Qur-án, 30 : 41.) In this verse the Qur-án speaks of the corruption that prevailed in all countries of the world before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad. Mental, moral, and spiritual death had overtaken the human race. Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions of the world had lost their healthy influence on the lives of their followers. Study of the history of middle ages will prove this statement. As rain comes after drought, light after darkness, so our Creator sent a messenger to revive religion. Muhammad came and brought about a complete revolution in the moral and spiritual horizon of the world. He simply upheld the teachings of Jesus and other prophets. Why should we hesitate to accept him as the Prophet of God, when the time at his advent urgently needed the appearance of a prophet to revive the religion of God? For the last thirteen centuries the Qur-án is intact, and will remain so.

Belief alone cannot earn salvation for us. Salvation means attainment, by the soul, of a state of perfection which it can only secure after rigid observance of Divine laws. The more we avoid what is prohibited and follow the affirmative laws the more our soul will make progress spiritually. Religion then seems as a soul-perfecting agency. It lays down some spiritual exercises in the shape of daily prayers—these should not be the medium of helpless cry for material gain or, as is commonly supposed, for salvation. Prayers if said regularly, would germinate in us the zeal of self-purification and uplift our morality. Alongwith our daily prayers the recollections of our past actions and our individual responsibility for them, will serve as great preventives for refraining us from further transgressions. The Qur-án discloses our capabilities and aptitudes for further evolution of our soul. It presents before us Divine encouragement to evolve our soul and to reach the border of Divinity.

It is a great pity that in spite of the growth of civilisation the colour and caste distinctions are considered to be part of certain creeds. In India alone more than 30 millions, out of the population of 335 millions, are looked upon as *Untouchables*, unworthy of coming in contact with the rest. The religion of these untouchables is Hinduism of some form. Attempts are often made by their co-religionists to stop all chances of their progress and advancement. Those of the higher caste justify their actions. Christianity, too, presents a similar picture.

Islam alone has succeeded in establishing that brotherhood which has welded high and low, black and white, rich and poor in one fraternity. In Islam a king and a menial labourer stand on an equal footing. The true drama of brotherhood is enacted at Arfat in Mecca on the day of pilgrimage. All man-made barriers

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and distinctions are removed. The only form of address there is—brother or sister, father or mother, according to age and sex.

A universal religion alone can establish universal brotherhood. Islam has achieved this miracle simply because it is a religion with a universal message for all the worlds.

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## **RELIGION AND PROGRESS**

BY MUHAMMAD YAQUB SUFI

(Continued from Vol. XXII, p. 162.)

Regarded comprehensively science, if it does anything at all, provides us with rules governing the general economy of existence, helps us to discover new laws to simplify the equation of life a little, and, lastly, contributes somewhat towards making our planet a rather more comfortable and less fatiguing place to live in. But in so doing, it in no way minimises the dangers accompanying its material gifts, the chief of which is the definite hindrance it imparts in any attempt to achieve a higher state of mentality or to receive impulses towards a richer and more *Spiritual Activity*, which is the essential duty of man; for so long as we remain on the lower level, wedded for the most part to the earth and to earthly things, we will find it practically impossible to rise to a higher level to attain the greatness of mind, the inward freedom, and, above all, the constructive power which alone makes it possible to pursue the path of "creative activity" and to wrest unity from chaos which is the true end of life.

It is by studying science that a great man helps to lift the common life on to an essentially higher plane. Not only does he unify existing tendencies, but by bringing about an inner transformation he ennobles the whole message of the age. Unless some independent

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worth is given to life or life's activity, we cannot distinguish the spiritual from the merely human, or the eternal from the temporal, and with the exception of these few in whom the scattered rays of life's sun are concentrated to re-illumine the world, most of us are more than content to live aimlessly and in confusion, and call it a "scientific living."

Leaving aside those whom we hold responsible for mystifying life's bright passages, may we enquire of the scientist, who claims to have raised life to a higher level, what light he has thrown upon human existence, what place and purpose he assigns to it, and, in short, what is the character of human life as he conceives it ?

Ordinarily the reply to these questions, scientifically, would be from an Epicurean point of view.

It is not unreasonably maintained that religion, as an affair of the mind partakes much of the mystical and indefinable, and, like all intrinsic values, its experience is unique, immediate and, therefore, indescribable. It demands a state of profound peace of mind or equanimity, a triumphant joy allied with confident activity, and a feeling of reverence, and is followed closely by a condition of mystical ecstasy, which again defies description. Out of the deeps of this *mystical feeling* spring up the vital forces of religious life, and it is this which is the aim and object of a man of genius, for with him trust in reason is *only a part* of the trust in an Ultimate Intelligent Being ; and his true spiritual consciousness *includes* the conviction of the predominant rationality of the Universe.

For him Spiritualism does not consist in a spirit inherent in matter as its attribute and dissolving with it, but it is the *informing energy*, ever active ; the universal force underlying all creation, culminating in the creation of the human mind—or, say, the universal mind—the primal cause of all consciousness, perfect in all its

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functions and working in man to an end—*i.e.*, his ascent towards an eternal life. Thus looked at one might well exclaim : “ There is no god but God ” for the phenomena of various existences serve only as an index finger to that single blooming potency, giving life to all things, multiplies them and absorbs them again.

Thus understood all else beside Allah is non-existent. In whatsoever terms expressed, the idea underlying this term can be traced, as already stated, to the very infancy of mankind or from the very dawn of conscience, and has conveyed little else than the attributes of unity, of infinite energy, of infinite mind and of infinite righteousness, most of which, if not all, are admitted as certainties established by modern science. In its efforts to get experimentally at the root of all “ that is ” in this world, science has tended further to facilitate matters to bring this *unal* energy more to the fore.

At first all quantities of which science takes cognisance were divided into two kinds—matter and energy. In its analysis of matter, we were told, “ all bodies were composed of elements,” eighty-eight of which are now alleged to compose all matter—a definiteness rather revolting to our instincts. Later researches, however, have established that the atoms which were said to be the final pieces, beyond which the division of elements could not be carried, are divisible and, what is more to our purpose, not different in kind. The physicists tell us that all matter consists of two kinds of units—one (the proton) bearing positive electricity and the other (the electron) bearing negative electricity. The internal structure of the proton or the electron is not yet known ; but it would not be surprising if later researches should reduce them to some form of energy also. The charges of electricity which these protons and electrons carry are admittedly a form of energy, so that science, while

replacing the haphazard multiplicity of elements by something more systematic and "unified" has at the same time bridged the ancient gulf between matter and energy. If, now, we add to this what we have on the authority of an expert that "the whole phenomena of vital chemistry are, also, the product of this same energy," we see clearly that all "that is" is a manifestation of that energy.

This energy plus the intelligence that turns the sap drawn from the ground into a tree, or into a blade of grass, or a worm swallowed by a bird into the substance of that bird is this energy thus *directed*: metaphorically put, the life of these phenomena—the tree, the blade, the worm, the bird—is traceable to the same energy, and it requires no extraordinary exertion on our part to understand it. The oceans of this earth in all their vastness and the various forms of life are but a laboratory for this creative force.

That *we* move and have our being in the midst of this *unal* energy is a possible statement, but hardly an adequate phrase, for it leads to the supposition that *we* are in some way differentiated from it. Intrinsically we are not only the resultant act of the activity of this energy, but *it* is ourselves, for minus it we can hardly say we are. In this way alone can we understand the Islamic formula, that there exists nothing worth reviving as a being minus this Intelligent Energy, commonly called Allah.

(*To be continued.*)

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## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

**ISLAM THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word Islam literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission ; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.*, the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-ÁN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number : belief in (1) Allah ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil ; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number : (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad ; (2) Prayer ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Almsgiving ; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS OF ISLAM.**—“Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes,” says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.